

NEVERTHELESS, HEREAFTER

NO. 1364

A SERMON
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“Jesus said unto him, You have said (or said so), nevertheless, I say unto you, Hereafter shall you see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.”
Matthew 26:64. (NKJV)*

OUR Lord, before His enemies, was silent in His own defense, but He faithfully warned and boldly avowed the truth. His was the silence of patience, not of indifference—of courage, not of cowardice. It is written that “before Pontius Pilate He witnessed a good confession,” and that statement may also be well applied to His utterances before Caiaphas, for there He was not silent when it came to confession of necessary truth. If you will read the chapter now open before us, you will notice that the high priest adjured Him, saying, “Are You the Christ, the Son of God?” to which He replied at once, “You have said it.” He did not disown His Messiahship. He claimed to be the promised one, the messenger from heaven, Christ the anointed of the Most High. Neither did He for a moment disavow His personal deity. He acknowledged and confessed that He was the Son of God. How could He be silent when such a vital point as to His person was in question? He did not hold them in suspense, but openly declared His Godhead by saying, “I am,” for so are His words reported by one of the evangelists. He then proceeded to reveal the solemn fact that He would soon sit at the right hand of God, even the Father. In the words of our text He declared that those who were condemning Him would see Him glorified and in due time would stand at His bar when He would come upon the clouds of heaven to judge the quick and dead according to our gospel. See, then, dear brethren, in a few words, the great truths of our holy religion clearly set forth by our Lord Jesus. He claimed to be the Christ of God and the Son of God, and His brief statement by implication speaks of Jesus dead, buried, and risen, and now enthroned at the right hand of God in the power of the Father, and Jesus soon to come in His glorious second advent to judge the world in righteousness. Our Lord’s confession was very full, and happy is he who heartily embraces it.

I intend to dwell upon three catch-words around which there gathers a world of encouraging and solemn thought. The first is, “*nevertheless*,” and the second is, “*hereafter*.” What the third is you shall know hereafter, but not just now.

I. “NEVERTHELESS,” said Christ, “hereafter shall you see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” This, then, is the string from which we must draw forth music. “*Nevertheless*,” which being interpreted by being pulled in pieces, signifies that the truth is never-the-less sure because of opposition. “*Nevertheless*,” not one atom the less is the truth certain to prevail for all that you say or do against it. Jesus will surely sit at the right hand of power and come in due season, upon the clouds of heaven. Let us dwell for a little time upon this important fact, that truth is none the less certain because of the opposition of men and devils.

Observe, first, that *the Savior’s condition when He made use of that, “nevertheless,” was no proof that He would not rise to power.* There He stood, a poor, defenseless, emaciated man, newly led from the night watch in the garden and its bloody sweat. *He was a spectacle of meek and lowly suffering* led by His captors like a lamb to the slaughter, with none to speak a word on His behalf. He was surrounded by those who hated Him and He was forsaken by His friends. Scribes, Pharisees, priests were all thirsting for His heart’s blood. A lamb in the midst of wolves is but a faint picture of Christ standing there before the Sanhedrin in patient silence. And yet, though His present condition seemed to contradict it, He who was the faithful and true witness spoke truly when He testified, “*Nevertheless, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven. Despite My present shame and suffering, so it shall be.*”

He gives Himself that lowly, humble title of Son of Man, as best indicating Himself in His condition at that time. “Hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” The humiliation of Christ did not in the least endanger His after glory. His sufferings, His shame, His death did not render it any the less certain that He would climb to His throne. Nor did the caviling of His opposers keep Him for one instant from His place of honor. I want you to remember this, for there is a great principle in it. There are many poor weak-minded people who cannot take sides with a persecuted truth, nor accept anything but the most popular and fashionable form of religion. They dare not be with truth when men spit in its face, or buffet it, or pour contempt upon it, but it will be victorious none the less, although cowards desert it and false-hearted men oppose it. If it stands alone at the bar of the world, a culprit to be condemned, if it receive nothing but a universal hiss of human execration, yet, if it be the truth, it may be condemned, but it will be justified. It may be buried, but it will rise. It may be rejected, but it will be glorified, even as it has happened to the Christ of God. Who would be ashamed of truth at any time when he knows the preciousness of it? Who will tremble because of present opposition when he foresees what will yet come of it? What a sublime spectacle—the man of sorrows standing before His cruel judges in all manner of weakness and poverty and contempt, and at the same time heir of all things and appointed, nevertheless, to sit at the right hand of power and to come in the clouds of heaven.

Nor may we think only of His condition as a despised and rejected man, for He was, on His trial, charged with grievous wrong and about to be *condemned by the ecclesiastical authorities*. The scribes, learned in the law, declared that He blasphemed and the priests, familiar with the ordinances of God, exclaimed, “Away with Him. It is not meet that He should live.” The high priest himself gave judgment that it was expedient for Him to be put to death. It is a very serious thing, is it not, when all the ecclesiastical authorities are against you—when they are unanimous in your condemnation? Yes, verily, and it may cause great searching of heart, for no peaceable man desires to be opposed to constituted authority, but would sooner have the good word of those who sit in Moses’ seat. But this was not the last time in which the established ecclesiastical authorities were wrong, grievously wrong. They were condemning the innocent and blaspheming the Lord from heaven. Nor, I say, was this the last time in which the miter and the gown have been upon the side of cruel wrong—yet this did not un-Christ our Savior or rob Him of His deity or His throne. On the same principle, human history brings before us abundance of instances in which, nevertheless, though scribes, priests, bishops, pontiffs, and popes condemned the truth, it was just as sure and became as triumphant as it had a right to do. There stands the one lone man and there are all the great ones around Him—men of authority and reputation, sanctity and pomp—and they unanimously deny that He can ever sit at the right hand of God. “But, nevertheless,” says He, “hereafter you shall see the Son of Man at the right hand of power.” He spoke the truth. His declaration has been most gloriously fulfilled up to now. Even thus over the neck of clergy, priests, pontiffs, popes, His triumphant chariot of salvation shall still roll and the truth—the simple truth of His glorious gospel—shall, despite them all, win the day and reign over the sons of men.

Nor is this all. Our Lord at that time was *surrounded by those who were in possession of earthly power*. The priests had the ear of Pilate and Pilate had the Roman legions at his back. Who could resist such a combination of force? Craft and authority form a dreadful league. One disciple had drawn a sword, but just at the time when our Lord stood before the Sanhedrin, that one chivalrous warrior had denied Him, so that all the physical force was on the other side. As a man, He was helpless when He stood bound before the council. I am not speaking now of that almighty power which faith knows to have dwelt in Him, but as to human power, He was weakness at its weakest. His cause seemed at the lowest ebb. He had none to stand up in His defense—no, none to speak a word on His behalf, for, “Who shall declare His generation?” And yet, for all that, and even because of it, He did rise to sit at the right hand of power and He shall come in the clouds of heaven. So if it ever comes to pass, my brother, that you should be the lone advocate of a forgotten truth—if your Master should ever put you, in all your weakness and infirmity, in the midst of the mighty and the strong, do not fear or tremble, for the possession of power is but a trifle compared with the possession of truth, and he that has the right may safely defy the might of the world. He shall win and conquer, let the princes and powers that betake to them-

selves what force and craft they choose. Jesus, nevertheless, wins, though the power is all against Him—and so shall the truth which He represents—for it wears about it a hidden power which baffles all opponents.

Nor was it merely all the power, there was *a great deal of furious rage against Him*. That Caiaphas, how he spoke to Him! “I adjure you,” said he, “by God.” And after he has spoken, he tears his garments in indignation, his anger burns like fire, but the Christ is very quiet. The Lamb of God is still, and looking His adversary in the face, He says, “Nevertheless, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven.” He was strong and therefore calm. He was confident and therefore peaceful, fully assured and therefore patient. He could wait, for He believed and His prophecy was true, notwithstanding the high priest’s rage. So, if we meet with any man at any time who gnashes his teeth at us, who foams in passion, who dips his pen into the bitterest gall to write down our holy faith, and who is indefatigable in his violent efforts against the Christ of God—what does it matter? “Nevertheless, you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power.” “Yet have I set My king upon My holy hill of Zion,” said Jehovah and He declared the decree though the heathen raged and the people imagined a vain thing. Well may He smile at rage who is so sure of victory.

Yes, but it was not one person that raged merely. The people of Jerusalem and the multitudes that had come up to the Passover, bribed and egged on by the priests and the Pharisees, were all hot after our Savior’s death, clamoring, “Crucify Him. Crucify Him.” And yet there He stood and as He heard their tumult and anticipated its growing demand for His blood, He lost not His confidence, but He calmly said, “Nevertheless, hereafter shall you see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power.” Behold His perfect inward peace and see how He manifests it by a bold confession in the very teeth of all His adversaries. “You may be as many as the waves of the sea and you may foam and rage like the ocean in a storm, but the purpose and the decree of God will, nevertheless, be fulfilled. You cannot delay or hinder it one whit. You, to your everlasting confusion, shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power.”

Beloved, you know that after He had said this, our Lord was taken before Herod and Pilate and at last was put to death. He knew all this, foreseeing it most clearly, and yet it did not make Him hesitate. He knew that He would be crucified and that His enemies would boast that there was the end of Him and of His kingdom. He knew that His disciples would hide themselves in holes and corners and that nobody would dare to say a word concerning the man of Nazareth. He foreknew that the name of the Nazarene would be bandied about amid general opprobrium and Jerusalem would say, “That cause is crushed out. That egg of mischief has been broken,” but He, foreseeing all that and more, declared, “Nevertheless, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” I cannot help harping upon the text—I hope I shall not weary you with it, for to me it is music. I do not like running over the word, “*nevertheless*,” too quickly. I like to draw it out and repeat it as, “never-the-less.” No, not one jot the less will His victory come. Not in the least degree was His royal power endangered or His sure triumph imperiled. Not even by His death and the consequent scattering of His disciples was the least hazard occasioned, but indeed, all these things worked together for the accomplishment of the divine purpose concerning Him, and the lower He stooped the more sure He was to rise ultimately to His glory.

And now, beloved, it is even so. The man, Christ Jesus, was despised and rejected of men, but at this moment He sits at the right hand of power. All power is given to Him in heaven and in earth and therefore does He bid us proclaim His gospel. There is not an angel but does His bidding. Providence is arranged by His will, for, “The government shall be upon His shoulder and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.” Atoning work is done and therefore, He sits. His work is well done and therefore, He sits on the right hand of God, in the place of honor and dignity. Before long He will come. We cannot tell when. He may come tonight or He may tarry many a weary year—but He will surely come in person, for did not the angels say to the men of Galilee, as they stood gazing into heaven, “This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go into heaven”? He shall come with blast of trumpet and with thousands of angelic beings, all doing Him honor. He shall come with flaming fire to visit the trembling earth. He shall come with all

His Father's glories on and kings and princes shall stand before Him and He shall reign amongst His ancients gloriously. The tumults of the people and the plotting of their rulers shall be remembered in that day, but it shall be to their own eternal shame. His throne shall be none the less resplendent.

I beg you to learn the spiritual lesson which comes out of this. I have already indicated it and it is this—never be afraid to stand by a losing cause. Never hesitate to stand alone when the truth is to be confessed. Never be overawed by sacerdotalism, or daunted by rage, or swayed by multitudes. Unpopular truth is, nevertheless, eternal and that doctrine which is ridiculed and cast out as evil today shall bring immortal honor to the man who dares to stand by its side and share its humiliation. Oh, for the love of the Christ who thus threw a “nevertheless,” at the feet of His foes, follow Him wherever He goes. Through flood or flame, in loneliness, in shame, in obloquy, in reproach—follow Him! If it be without the camp, follow Him! If every step shall cost you abuse and scorn, follow still. Yes, to prison and to death still follow Him, for as surely as He sits at the right hand of power, so shall those who love Him and have been faithful to His truth sit down upon His throne with Him. His overcoming and enthronement are the pledges of the victory both of the truth and of those who courageously espouse it. Thus have we sounded our first great bell—“NEVERTHELESS.” Let its music ring through the place and charm each opened ear.

II. The second bell is “HEREAFTER.” “Nevertheless, hereafter.” I like the sound of those two bells together. Let us ring them again. “Nevertheless, *hereafter*.” The hereafter seems in brief to say to me that *the main glory of Christ lies in the future*. Not today, perhaps, nor tomorrow will the issue be seen! Have patience! Wait a while. “Your strength is to sit still.” God has great leisure, for He is the Eternal. Let us partake in His restfulness while we sing, “*Nevertheless, hereafter*.” O for the Holy Spirit's power at this moment, for it is written, “He will show you things to come.”

It is one great reason why the unregenerate sons of men cannot see any glory in the kingdom of Christ because to them it is such a future thing. Its hopes look into eternity. Its great rewards are beyond this present time and state, and the most of mortal eyes cannot see so far. Unregenerate men are like Passion in John Bunyan's parable—they will have all their good things *now*—and so they have their toys and break them and they are gone, and then their hereafter is a dreary outlook of regret and woe. Men of faith know better and like Patience in the same parable, they choose to have their best things last, for that which comes last, lasts on forever. He whose turn comes last has none to follow him and his good things shall never be taken away from him. The poor, almost-blind world cannot see beyond its own nose and so it must have its joys and riches at once. To them, speedy victory is the main thing and the truth is nothing. Is the cause triumphant today? Off with your caps and throw them up and cry, “Hurrah!” No matter that it is the cause of a lie. Do the multitudes incline that way? Then sirs, if you are worldly-wise run with them. Pull off the palm branches; strew the roads, and shout, “Hosanna to the hero of the hour!” though he is a despot or a deceiver. But not so—not so with those who are taught of God. They take eternity into their estimate and they are contented to go with the despised and rejected of men for the present, because they recollect the hereafter. They can swim against the flood for they know where the course of this world is tending. O blind world, if you were wise, you would amend your line of action and begin to think of the hereafter too, for the hereafter will soon be *here*. What a short time it is since Adam walked in the Garden of Eden. Compared with the ages of the rocks, compared with the history of the stars, compared with the life of God, it is as the winking of an eye or as a flash of lightning. One has but to grow a little older and years become shorter and time appears to travel at a much faster rate than before, so that a year rushes by you like a meteor across the midnight heavens. When we are older still, and look down from the serene abodes above, I suppose that centuries and ages will be as moments to us, for to the Lord they are as nothing. Suppose the coming of the Lord should be put off for ten thousand years—it is but supposition—but if it were, ten thousand years will soon be gone and when the august spectacle of Christ coming on the clouds of heaven shall really be seen, the delay will be as though but an hour had intervened. The space between now and then, or rather the space between what is “now” at this time and what will be “now” at the last—how short a span it is! Men will look back from the eternal world and say, “How could we have thought so much of the fleeting life we have lived on earth when it was to be followed by eternity? What fools we were to make such count of momentary,

transient pleasures when now the things which are not seen and are eternal, have come upon us and we are unprepared for them!" Christ will soon come and at the longest, when He comes, the interval between today and then will seem to be just nothing at all—so that "hereafter" is not as the sound of a far-off cannon, nor as the boom of distant thunder, but it is the rolling of rushing wheels hastening to overtake us.

"Hereafter!" "Hereafter!" Oh, when that hereafter comes, how overwhelming it will be to Jesus' foes! Now where is Caiaphas? Will he now adjure the Lord to speak? Now, you priests, lift up your haughty heads! Utter a sentence against Him now! There sits your victim upon the clouds of heaven. Say now that He blasphemes and hold up your torn rags and condemn Him again. But where is Caiaphas? He hides his guilty head. He is utterly confused and begs the mountains to fall upon him. And oh, you men of the Sanhedrin who sat at midnight and glared at your innocent victim with your cold, cruel eyes and afterwards gloated over the death of your martyred Prince—where are you now—now that He has come with all His Father's power to judge you? They are asking the hills to open their caverns and conceal them. The rocks deny them shelter. And where, on that day, will you be, you who deny His deity, who profane His Sabbath, who slander His people, and denounce His gospel—oh, where will you be in that tremendous day which as surely comes as comes tomorrow's rising sun? Oh, sirs, consider this word, "Hereafter!" I would gladly whisper it in the ear of the sinner fascinated by his pleasures. Come near and let me do so, "*Hereafter!*" I would make it the alarm of the sleeping transgressor who is dreaming of peace and safety while he is slumbering himself into hell. Hereafter! Hereafter! Oh, yes, you may suck the sweet and eat the fat, and drink as you will, but hereafter! Hereafter! What will you do hereafter, when that which is sweet in the mouth shall be as gall in the belly and when the pleasures of today shall be a mixture of misery for eternity? Hereafter! Oh, hereafter! Now, O Spirit divine, be pleased to open careless ears that they may listen to this prophetic sound.

To the Lord's own people there is no sound more sweet than that of, "hereafter." "Hereafter you shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven." Welcome, welcome, welcome, welcome, Redeemer, Savior! Welcome in every character in which You come. What acclamations and congratulations will go up from the countless myriads of His redeemed, when first the ensigns of the Son of Man shall be seen in the heavens! On some one of earth's mornings, when the children of men shall be "marrying and giving in marriage," while saints shall be looking for His appearing, they shall first of all perceive that He is actually coming. Long desired and come at last. Then the trumpet shall be heard, waxing exceeding loud and long, ringing out a sweeter note to the true Israel than ever trumpet heard on the morn of Jubilee. What delight! What lifting up of gladsome eyes! What floods of bliss! Oppression is over. The idols are broken. The reign of sin is ended. Darkness shall no more cover the nations. He comes. He comes. Glory be to His name!—

*"Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all."*

O blessed day of acclamations! Heaven's vault shall be opened with them when His saints shall see for themselves what was reserved for Him and for them in the "hereafter." "You shall see the Son of Man at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

That word, "hereafter," my brothers and sisters, is, at this moment, our grandest solace and I wish to bring it before you in that light. Have you been misunderstood, misrepresented, slandered because of fidelity to the right and to the true? Do not trouble yourself. Vindicate not your own cause. Refer it to the King's Bench above and say, "Hereafter, hereafter." Have you been accused of being mad, fanatical, and I know not what besides, because to you party is nothing, and ecclesiastical pride nothing, and the stamp of popular opinion nothing, because you are determined to follow the steps of your Master and believe the true and do the right? Then be in no hurry—the sure hereafter will settle the debate. Or are you very poor, very sick, and very sad? But are you Christ's own? Do you trust Him? Do you live in fellowship with Him? Then the hope of the hereafter may well take the sting out of the present. It is not for long that you shall suffer—the glory will soon be revealed in you and around you. There are streets of gold symbolic of your future wealth and there are harps celestial emblematical of your eternal joy. You shall have a white robe soon and the dusty garments of toil shall be laid aside forever. You shall have a

far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory and therefore the light affliction which is but for a moment may well be endured with patience. Have you labored in vain? Have you tried to bring souls to Christ and had no recompense? Fret not, but remember the hereafter. Many a laborer, unsuccessful in the eyes of man, will receive a, “Well done, good and faithful servant,” from his Master on that day. Set little store by anything you have and wish but lightly for anything that you have not. Let the present be to you as it really is—a dream, an empty show, and project your soul into the hereafter which is solid and enduring, for oh, what music there is in it! What delight to a true child of God! “Nevertheless, hereafter.”

I feel half inclined to have done and to send you out of the place, singing all the way, “Nevertheless, hereafter.” The people outside might not understand you, but it would be a perfectly justifiable enthusiasm of delight.

III. Now, thirdly. Where am I to look for my third bell? Where is the third word I spoke of? In truth, I cannot find it in the version which we commonly use and there is no third word in the original, and yet the word I am thinking of is there. The truth is that the second word, which has been rendered by, “hereafter,” bears another meaning. I will give you what the Greek critics say. As nearly as can be, the meaning of the word is, “HENCEFORWARD.” “Henceforward you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” “*Henceforward.*” That is another word and the teaching gathered out of it is this—*even in the present there are tokens of the victory of Christ.* “But,” says one, “did Christ say to those priests that henceforward they should see Him sitting at the right hand of power?” Yes, yes, that is what He meant. He meant, “You look at Me and scorn Me, but, sirs, you shall not be able to do this any longer, for henceforward you shall see for yourselves that I am not what I appear to be, but that I sit at the right hand of power. Henceforward, and as long as you live, you shall know that galling truth.” And did that come true? Yes, it came true that night—for when the Savior died, there came a messenger unto the members of the Sanhedrin and others, and told them that the veil of the Temple was torn in two. In that moment, when the man of Nazareth died, that splendid piece of tapestry seemed to tear itself asunder from end to end as if in horror at the death of its Lord. The members of that council, when they met each other in the street and spoke of the news, must have been dumb in sheer astonishment, but while they looked upon each other, the earth they stood upon reeled and reeled again, and they could scarcely keep their feet. This was not the first wonder which had that day startled them, for the sun had been beclouded in unnatural darkness. At midday the sun had ceased to shine and now the earth ceases to be stable. Lo, also, in the darkness of the evening, certain members of this council saw the sheeted dead, newly arisen from their sepulchers, walking through the streets, for the rocks split, the earth shook, the graves opened, and the dead came forth and appeared unto many. Thus early they began to know that the man of Nazareth was at the right hand of power.

Early on the third morning, when they were met together, there came a messenger in hot haste who said, “The stone is rolled away from the door of the sepulcher. Remember that you placed a watch and that you set your seal upon the stone. But early this morning the soldiers say that He came forth. He rose, that dreaded one whom we put to death, and at the sight of Him the keepers did quake and became as dead men.” Now, these men—these members of the Sanhedrin—believed that fact, and we have clear evidence that they did so, for they bribed the soldiers and said, “You say, ‘His disciples came and stole away His body while we slept.’” Then did the word also continue to be fulfilled and they plainly saw that Jesus, whom they had condemned, was at the right hand of power. A few weeks passed over their heads and lo, there was a noise in the city and an extraordinary excitement. Peter had been preaching and three thousand persons in one day had been baptized into the name which they dreaded so much, and they were told, and heard it on the best of evidence, that there had been a wonderful manifestation of the Holy Spirit, such as was spoken of in the Book of the prophet Joel. Then they must have looked one another in the face and stroked their beards and bitten their lips, and said to one another, “Did He not say that we should see Him at the right hand of power?” They had often to remember that word and again and again to see its truth, for when Peter and John were brought before them, it was proven that they had restored a lame man, and these two unlearned and ignorant men told them that it was through the name of Jesus that the lame were made to leap and walk. Day after day they were continuously

obliged, against their will, to see, in the spread of the religion of the man whom they had put to death, that His name had power about it such as they could not possibly speak against or resist. Lo, one of their number, Paul had been converted and was preaching the faith which he had endeavored to destroy. They must have been much amazed and chagrined, as in this also they discerned that the Son of Man was at the right hand of power.

Yes, you say, but did they see Him coming in the clouds of heaven? I answer, yes. Henceforth they saw that also, for they began to have upon their minds forebodings and dark thoughts. The Jewish nation was in an ill state. The people were getting disquieted. Imposters were rising and the leading men of the nation trembled as to what the Romans would do. At last there came an outbreak and the imperial power was defied, and then, such of them as still survived, began to realize the words of Christ. When they saw the comet in the sky and the drawn sword hanging over Jerusalem, when they saw the city compassed about with armies, when they watched the legions dig the trenches and throw up the earthworks and surround the devoted city, while all around was fire and famine—when from every tower upon the walls they could see one of their own countrymen nailed to a cross, for the Romans put the Jews to death by crucifixion by hundreds and even by thousands—then they must have begun to see the coming of the Son of Man. And when, at last, the city was destroyed and a firebrand was hurled even into the holy place and the Jews were banished and sold for slaves till they would not fetch the price of a pair of shoes, so many were they and so greatly despised—then they saw the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven to take vengeance on His adversaries.

Read the text as meaning, “Henceforward you shall see the Son of Man at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” It is not the full meaning of the passage, but it is a part of that meaning, beyond all question.

Beloved, even at the present time we may see the tokens of the power of Christ among us. Only tokens mark you. I do not want to take you off from the hereafter, but henceforward and even now there are tokens of the power of our Lord Jesus. Look at revivals. When they break out in the church, how they stagger all the adversaries of Christ. They said—yes, they dared to say—that the gospel had lost all its power, that since the days of Whitefield and Wesley, there was no hope of the masses being stirred, yet when they see, even in this house, from Sabbath to Sabbath, vast crowds listening to the Word and when, some few months ago no house could be built that was large enough to accommodate the thronging masses who sought to hear our American brethren, then were they smitten in the mouth, so that they could speak no more, for it was manifested that the Lord Christ still lives and that, if His gospel is fully and simply preached, it will still draw all men to Him and souls will be saved, and that not a few.

And look in the brave world outside, apart from religion, what influences there are abroad which are due to the power of the Christ of God. Would you have believed it twenty years ago, that in America there should be no more slaves? That united Italy should be free of her despots? Could you have believed that the Pope would be pulling about his being a prisoner in the Vatican and that the power of antichrist would be shorn away? No, the wonders of history, even within the last few years, are enough to show us that Christ is at the right hand of power. Come what will in the future, mark this, my brethren, it will never be possible to uphold tyranny and oppression long, for the Lord Christ is to the front for the poor and needy of the earth. O despots, you may do what you will and use your craft and policy, if you please, but all over this world the Lord Jesus Christ has lifted up a plummet and set up a righteous standard, and He will draw a straight line and it will pass through everything that offends, that it may be cut off, and it will also pass over all that is good and lovely and right and just and true, and these shall be established in His reign among men. I believe in the reign of Christ. Kings, sultans, czars—these are puppets, all of them, and your parliaments and congresses are but vanity of vanity. God is great and none but He. Jesus is the King in all the earth. He is the man, the King of men, the Lord of all. Glory be to His name. As the years progress we shall see it more and more, for He has had long patience, but He is beginning now to cut the work short in righteousness. He is baring His right arm for war and that which denies manhood’s just claims, that which treads upon the neck of the humanity which Christ has taken, that which stands against His throne and dominion must be broken in pieces like a potter’s vessel, for the scepter in His hand is a rod of iron and He will use it mightily. The Christ, then, gives tokens still

of His power. They are only tokens, but they are sure ones, even as the dawn does not deceive us, though it is not the noontide.

And oh, let me say, there are some of you present who are enemies of Christ, but you also must have perceived some tokens of His power. I have seen Him shake the infidel by the gospel till he has said, “You almost persuade me to be a Christian.” He has taken him in the silence of the night and probed his conscience—in His gentleness and love and pity He has led the man to think—and though he has not altogether yielded, yet he has felt that there is a solemn power about the Christ of God. Some of the worst of men have been forced to acknowledge that Christ has conquered them. Remember how Julian, as he died, said, “The Nazarene has overcome me. The Nazarene has overcome me.” May you not have to say that in the article of death, but oh, that you may say it now. May His love overpower you. May His compassion win you and you will see in your own salvation tokens of His power.

But I must have done, for my time has fled, but I desire to add that it will be a blessed thing if everyone here, becoming a believer in Jesus, shall henceforward see Him at the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven. Would to God we could live with that vision in full view, believing Jesus to be at the right hand of power, trusting Him, and resting in Him. Because we know Him to be the Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle, we ought never to have a doubt when we are doing what is right. We ought never to have a doubt when we are following Jesus, for He is more than a conqueror and so shall His followers be. Let us go on courageously, trusting in Him as a child trusts in his father, for He is mighty upon whom we repose our confidence.

Let us also keep before our mind’s eye the fact that He is coming. Be not as the virgins that fell asleep. Even now my ear seems to hear the midnight cry, “Behold, the Bridegroom comes!” Arise, you virgins, sleep no longer, for the Bridegroom is near. As for you, you foolish virgins, God grant that there may yet be time enough left to awake even you, that you may yet have oil for your lamps before He comes. He comes, we know not when, but He comes quickly. Be ready, for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of Man comes. Be as men that watch for their Lord and as servants that are ready to give in their account, because the master of the house is near. In that spirit let us come to the Lord’s Table, as often as we gather there, for He has said to us, “Do this until I come.” Outward ordinances will cease when He comes, for we shall need no memorial when the Lord Himself will be among us. Let us here pledge Him in the cup. That He is coming, we do verily believe. That He is coming, we do joyfully proclaim. Is it a subject of joy to you? If not—

*“You sinners seek His face,
Whose wrath you cannot bear.
Bow to the scepter of His grace,
And find salvation there.”*

God bless you for Christ’s sake.

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.

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